

Medical Evaluations

WAC 296-842-140

Summary

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY:

To make sure a respirator used under your specific worksite conditions isn't a health risk to employees



Exemption:

This section does **not** apply to employees who **only** use:

- Filtering-facepiece respirators voluntarily. See WAC 296-842-110 of this chapter for voluntary use requirements
- or**
- Escape-only respirators that are mouthpiece, loose-fitting, or hooded respirators.

Important:

- Using a respirator can create physical risks for an employee each time it is worn. The extent of these risks depends on these factors:
 - Type of respirator
 - Environmental conditions at the worksite
 - Physical demands of the work
 - Use of other protective clothing
 - Employee's health status.

You must

Provide medical evaluation
WAC 296-842-14005 140-2



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Rule

WAC 296-842-14005

Provide medical evaluations

Important:

If you have provided an employee with a medical evaluation addressing respirator use, as required by another chapter, that evaluation will meet the requirements of this section.

You must

- Follow the medical evaluation process, Steps 1 through 7 in this section, to provide medical evaluations for employees at no cost to them.



Helpful Tool:

Planning for Medical Evaluations

This information can help you prepare for employee medical evaluations. You can find a copy of this form in the Resources section of this chapter.

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Rule

WAC 296-842-14005 (Continued)

Medical Evaluation Process

Step 1: Identify employees who need medical evaluations **and** determine the frequency of evaluations from Table 7. Include employees who:

- Are required to use respirators
- or**
- Voluntarily use respirators that aren't filtering-facepiece respirators



Note:

You may use a previous employer's medical evaluation for an employee if you can:

- Show the employee's previous work and use conditions were substantially similar to yours
- and**
- Obtain a copy of the licensed health care professional's (LHCP's) written recommendation approving the employee's use of the respirator chosen by you.

Step 2: Identify a licensed health care professional (LHCP) to perform your medical evaluations.



Note:

If you select a different LHCP, you don't need to have new medical evaluations done.

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Rule

WAC 296-842-14005 (Continued)

Step 3: Make sure your LHCP has the following information **before** the evaluation is completed:

- Information describing the respirators employees may use, including the weight and type.
- How the respirators will be used, including:
 - How often the respirator will be used, for example, daily, or once a month
 - The duration of respirator use, for example, a minimum of one hour, or up to 12 hours
 - The employee's expected physical work effort
 - Additional personal protective clothing and equipment to be worn
 - Temperature and humidity extremes expected during use
- A copy of your written respiratory protection program and this chapter.



Note:

- You may choose to send the questionnaire to the LHCP ahead of time, giving time to review it and add any necessary questions
- The LHCP determines what questions to add to the questionnaire, if any; however, questions in Parts 1-3 may not be deleted or substantially altered.

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Rule

WAC 296-842-14005 (Continued)

Step 4: Administer the medical questionnaire in WAC 296-842-22005 to employees, **or** provide them a medical exam that obtains the same information.



Note:

You may use on-line questionnaires if the questions are the same and requirements of this section are met.

- Administer the examination or questionnaire at no cost to employees:
 - During the employee's normal working hours
- or**
- At a time and place convenient to the employee
- Maintain employee confidentiality during examination or questionnaire administration:
 - Do **not** view employee's answers on the questionnaire



Note:

Providing confidentiality is important for securing successful medical evaluations. It helps make sure the LHCP gets complete and dependable answers on the questionnaire.

- Do **not** act in a manner that may be considered a breach of confidentiality
- Make sure employees understand the content of the questionnaire.
- Provide the employee with an opportunity to discuss the questionnaire or exam results with the LHCP.

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WAC 296-842-14005 (Continued)

Step 5: Provide follow-up evaluation for employees when:

- The LHCP needs more information to make a final recommendation
or
- An employee gives any positive response to questions 1-8 in Part 2 **or** to questions 1-6 in Part 3 of the WISHA Medical Evaluation Questionnaire in WAC 296-842-22005.



Note:

Follow-up may include:

- Employee consultation with the LHCP such as a telephone conversation to evaluate positive questionnaire responses
- Medical exams
- Medical tests or other diagnostic procedures.

Step 6: Obtain a written recommendation from the LHCP that contains only the following medical information:

- Whether or not the employee is medically able to use the respirator
- Any limitations of respirator use for the employee
- What future medical evaluations, if any, are needed
- A statement that the employee has been provided a copy of the written recommendation.

Step 7: Provide a powered, air-purifying respirator (PAPR) when the LHCP determines the employee shouldn't wear a negative-pressure air-purifying respirator **and** is able to wear a PAPR.



Reference:

See WAC 296-842-130 for requirements regarding selection of air-purifying respirators.

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Rule

WAC 296-842-14005 (Continued)



Note:

- You may discontinue medical evaluations for an employee when the employee no longer uses a respirator.
- If you have staff conducting your medical evaluations, they may keep completed questionnaires and findings as confidential medical records, if they are maintained separately from other records.

Use Table 7 to determine medical evaluation frequency.

Table 7 Evaluation Frequency	
Type of Evaluation	When Required
Initial medical evaluations	Before respirators are fit-tested or used in the workplace.
Subsequent medical evaluations	<p>If any of these occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Your licensed health care professional (LHCP) recommends them; for example, periodic evaluations at specified intervals.- A respirator program administrator or supervisor informs you that an employee needs reevaluation- Medical signs or symptoms such as breathing difficulties) are:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observed during fit-testing or program evaluation <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reported by the employee <p>- Changes in worksite conditions such as physical work effort, personal protective clothing, or temperature that could substantially increase the employee's physiological stress</p>



Notes
